

MERCURY CONCENTRATIONS IN BLOOD AND FEATHERS OF NESTLING FLORIDA BALD EAGLES

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High mercury levels occur in fish in several aquatic systems throughout Florida. As a top predator of aquatic systems relying heavily on fish as prey, bald eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) can bio-accumulate mercury resulting in elevated mercury levels in tissues. The objective of this study is to determine the amount of mercury concentrated in the blood and feathers of nestling bald eagles in Florida and to determine the source of any mercury detected. These data will provide baseline information for the Florida eagle population. Samples were collected from nests throughout the state of Florida to examine several different river and wetland systems to assure detection of problem areas. Blood and feather samples were collected from 41 nestlings in March and April 1993. We removed the outer $\frac{2}{3}$ of 5-7 breast and upper abdominal feathers from nestlings. Blood samples were drawn from the brachial vein in the right wing with a 2 cc sterilized syringe. We also collected molted feathers from adults at 16 nests.

DIET AND HABITAT UTILIZATION OF NORTHERN GOSHAWKS IN SHRUB-STEPPE HABITATS OF NEVADA

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In 1993, we used tail-mounted, posture-sensitive radios to monitor the habitat use of breeding male northern goshawks (*Accipiter gentilis*) in shrub-steppe habitats in the Independence and Bull Run Mountains of northeastern Nevada. Although male goshawks were sometimes seen foraging in nearby open sage (*Artemisia* spp.) habitats, they were most frequently observed using thick patches (<1 ha) of stunted "snowbank" aspen or streamside willows (*Salix* spp.) for hunting perches. Males caught Belding's ground squirrels (*Spermophilus beldingi*) in open areas by surprise. In 1992 and 1993 we spent over 450 hr observing nests. In 1992, males switched from hunting ground squirrels to birds as nestlings reached fledging age and drought conditions forced ground squirrels to estivate early. A similar switch did not occur in 1993, perhaps because above average winter and spring precipitation delayed estivation and prolonged the availability of ground squirrel prey.

POSTER PRESENTATIONS

BRIDGE USE BY PEREGRINE FALCONS IN THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

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Peregrine falcons (*Falco peregrinus*) have been resident in the highly urbanized San Francisco Bay Area at least since the mid 1980s. Two pairs of falcons make annual nesting attempts on the Oakland-San Francisco Bay Bridge, while a third pair uses the Golden Gate Bridge as a hunting post. The latter pair has shifted nest locations between near-urban sites and wild coastal sites, while the Bay Bridge pairs invariably use the bridge during the nesting season but tend to move to downtown areas for the winter. Foraging habits and prey species differ between each pair, as do eggshell thinning and hatching success. In most years eggs were removed from bridge nesting pairs, in one instance a pair was triple clutched. Three instances of chicks fledging from the Bay Bridge were noted. Fledging success from bridge sites is poor, and several factors appear to contribute to high mortality of young falcons at fledging. We conclude that bridge nest sites must be enhanced to improve fledging success.

HAWKS ALOFT WORLDWIDE: A COOPERATIVE STRATEGY FOR PROTECTING MIGRATING RAPTORS IN THE AMERICAS

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In the past, raptor conservation efforts like Hawk Mountain's have focused on single sites. Today, many threats facing migrating raptors are international, not local, and broad, geographic strategies are needed to protect these birds. Hawk Mountain is responding to this situation with Hawks Aloft Worldwide, the Sanctuary's cooperative conservation strategy designed to protect raptors throughout their migratory journeys. The new effort builds on the Sanctuary's 57 yr of conservation experience, and formalizes and expands its role as a mentor to many of the world's raptor conservationists. Hawks Aloft Worldwide uses the spectacle of raptor migration to unite local conservationists in their attempts to protect the world's wildlife resources. Specifically, the initiative will: collect scientific data needed for raptor conservation, publish the first global atlas of raptor migration, train individuals at raptor-migration watch sites, and forge a global network of raptor conservationists. Given the ambitious nature of training phases of the project, initial efforts in these areas will focus on Latin America, where raptor-migration watch sites and active Hawks Aloft Worldwide cooperators are currently being sought.

THE PEREGRINE FALCON ON A WESTERN COASTAL LAGOON AT BAJA CALIFORNIA SUR, MEXICO

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